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The Mall-Avenue Triangle.

A fire which occurred yesterday morning in this city directs attention pointedly to the question of the ultimate utilization by the government of the land lying between the Avenue and the Mall, 2d and 15th streets. This area, broadly known as the Mall-Avenue triangle, has been for many years regarded as definitely destined for public-building use. A part of it has already been taken. The five blocks on the western end have been purchased by the government, which only uses a small portion for a temporary "war building." The Municipal building occupies one block, the Post Office Department another, and a square has been selected within the area for a hall of archives. These successive acquisitions have been made with strict regard for street lines, and the two permanent public buildings already erected have been planned with reference to them, in a way to permit no expansion save by bridging or finally closing the streets.

As a result of the expectation that the government would eventually take all of the land within the triangle, there has been little or no improvement of private property for years. Consequently the southern side of Pennsylvania avenue has deteriorated in appearance, and in character of use, a condition that has necessarily affected the other side in certain parts. Instead of being the capital's most impressive thoroughfare as its location and tradition compel, the stretch of a mile and a third between the Peace Monument and the Treasury is in a backward state, despite two impressive public buildings and in the western portion some well designed private business structures.

Sunday's fire brings directly to note the fact that there is no encouragement whatever to the owners of private property on this portion of Pennsylvania avenue to make improvements suitable to the street, and on the other hand, a definite discouragement. For the blight of possible condemnation has lain upon the south side for years, and will continue to rest there. It is only right and fair to the city and to the owners of this property that definite action be taken. The government has not suffered financially from the taking of the five squares at the western end in advance of actual building work. It has derived a good revenue from the property, and if it took the whole stretch of ground still remaining in private hands it could continue to secure a good return pending actual building operations.

This subject should be taken up early at the next session of Congress and studied earnestly, with a view to finding some way whereby the inequity of continued improvement-checking pre-emption without action may be corrected.

Our Unusual Autumn.

What has happened to our usually peaceful autumn? In the past it was a season of known moods, whose placid course might be charted in advance with practical certainty, so much so that one always looked forward to a cold, clear day for the Thanksgiving foot ball games. At such and such a day the sky would turn gray, on such and such a night the winds would begin to get colder, at such and such a week there might be a flurry of snow. So went the good old autumns of which the poets sang for more than half a century.

But if the "melancholy days have come, the saddest of the year," residents of the District only know it by the calendar. Fall has "taken a fall" out of the wisest weather prophets, mixing Indian summer with days of half-hearted cold, and then topping the whole off with a rain that might have been in season last May, but is decidedly out of season as December 1 approaches.

Even the farmers have no particular use for the present rain. The crops are all in, and the farmer would as soon do without it as his city cousin. But it fills the lakes and the rivers, and the urban reservoirs, and washes the streets of the city as no man-directed street-cleaning force can do. It might be well to remember this when the temptation comes to fuss and fume at the weather.

China long relied on philosophy to regulate her policies, but is beginning to perceive the difficulties attending efforts to establish an intellectual aristocracy.

Progress in Mexico.

The Obregon government will be a year old Wednesday. This is from a press report of conditions in Mexico:

A year of Obregon finds a nation more united and outwardly peaceful than in years still struggling to arrange its finances, but handicapped by lack of recognition by three great powers; a nation making some progress along the lines of reconstruction and reorganization. President Obregon, enjoying better health today than he did a year ago, is optimistic, and says that the sun is slowly but surely breaking through the clouds.

The three great powers which have not yet recognized the government are Great Britain, France and the United States. It is probably safe to say that recognition by the United States would be promptly followed by similar action on the part of Great Britain and France. Those governments are steering by us. They are assuming, with good reason, that as we are a next-door neighbor we should understand the question. And, in fact, we think we do.

American recognition is withheld because of the refusal of President Obregon to give assurances respecting American investments, existing and prospective, in Mexico. He declines, on the score that "such action would be neither legal nor within the dignity or pride of the nation."

And yet the proposition was submitted by Secretary Hughes, one of the most eminent of American lawyers, and has the indorsement of a nation having Mexico's welfare sincerely to heart.

If so much has been done without the recognition of the three powers named, how much more might have been done with it? With the strongest of outside support, President Obregon could put the Mexican house completely in order.

Death in a Theater Fire.

Again the fatal theater fire! At New Haven a packed motion picture house was yesterday the scene of a blaze and a panic as a result of which three people are dead and about eighty injured, some very badly. Most of the injuries were due to the rush of the crowd for the exits, where congestion occurred. Had perfect order been maintained and had the crowd moved quietly probably all would have escaped without any harm. There is no suggestion thus far in the dispatches that the exits were not all available, as has been the case heretofore in some instances.

Apparently the fire started on the stage, where realistic effects were being produced by colored fires and incense to precede a picture of the orient. It has come to be the practice in some of the motion picture theaters in this country thus to create "atmosphere" for the higher appreciation of the film drama, but this is the first case of fire resulting from such a cause. It is obviously necessary now to assure a rigid inspection of the stage equipment of the motion picture houses and a strict regulation of supplementary performances there.

Heretofore the chief fire danger in these places has been in the projection booths located at the rear, or the entrance end, of the theater. These booths are now under practically all state laws very well protected, and the fire risks are, furthermore, lowered by the improvement of projecting apparatus. Thus motion picture fires, which a few years ago occurred with sickening frequency, have now become a rarity.

Seemingly there is no possible safeguard against panic. People are trained in the matter of self-control, are urged to move out quietly at first alarms, are given diagrams of exits, are adjured to walk steadily and slowly toward the nearest point of egress, are told that under such conditions they can all leave the theater within two or three minutes. Still when the cry of "fire" arises, and smoke fills the auditorium, and especially when flames, as in New Haven, shoot out over the heads, a spirit of unreasoning fear prevails and a mad rush to the doors ensues, in which everybody's chance of escape is lessened and the danger of death is greatly increased.

An Amazing Inquiry.

This inquiry is propounded by a man prominent in the movement for the organization of a new party:

Why did not Mr. Hughes frankly state that the United States would adopt disarmament as a national policy, scrapping every battleship and abandoning poison gas and submarine warfare as the first progressive steps in bringing this about, as an example and precedent for other nations to follow?

There are several reasons why Mr. Hughes did not frankly state this.

The first reason is that he had no authority to make such a statement. He was addressing a conference called not for millennialistic but for practical purposes. Fancy the effect of such a statement, not only on the visiting delegates, but on the American people! Mr. Hughes would have made a reputation for audacity or humor, or both, unparalleled in history.

The second reason is that the Secretary is not a millennialist. He was chosen for his office because of a reputation for sagacity he had shown in other offices. The President did not invite an untried man to occupy the Secretaryship of State.

The third reason is that America is not a millennialistic nation. It has its feet on the ground now, and purposes keeping them there.

There need be no surprise in the fact that the author of this amazing inquiry holds to the opinion that both of the old parties are under the control of the same influences. Nor need the old parties have any fear of a new party organized on the basis of this opinion, and to be directed by those who entertain it.

The predictions that the next war, if there is to be a next war, will be the most horrible in history, have the support of the obvious fact that since war first began it has shown a cumulative tendency.

The prosperity and happiness promised by sovietism have never gotten much farther than the households of Lenin and Trotsky.

Delegates have at least the advantage of not feeling called upon to speak as voluminously as the literary reviewers of the proceedings write.

Complications naturally arise. Creating complications to order is a part of the business of old-school diplomacy.

The league of nations has all the respect that goes to patience and perseverance.

Oh, Fie, Suzanne!

A lively row has been precipitated in France over the failure of Mlle. Suzanne Lenglen, the French woman tennis champion, to hold her own against the American woman title holder in this country last summer. Mlle. Lenglen pleaded illness during her first match with Mrs. Mallory and quit a bad loser. There were some public expressions in disparagement of her course in view of all the circumstances, but on the whole the comment was sympathetic. The matter passed in this country with little disturbance, but in France Mlle. Suzanne's failure has been taken very much to heart. The other day the French Tennis Federation adopted a resolution blaming the directors of the American federation for unjustified commentaries upon her sporting spirit, though at the same time scolding her for her failure to play the game. Now Capt. Albert de Joannis, who accompanied Mlle. Lenglen to this country as a representative of the French federation, resigns in protest against the resolution just adopted, and declares that the French champion was perfectly fit when she met Mrs. Mallory, and that she was defeated "by a player who on that date showed a better brand of tennis." The trouble with Suzanne, he says, is that she knows how to win but does not know how to lose gracefully. Many a man is afflicted in that same way. But there is one French sportsman at least—and doubtless there are many others—who has proved a good loser. To him Capt. de Joannis refers, saying "Carpentier is a hero in America despite his defeat, because he showed grit and went down fighting." On the whole Suzanne would seem to have had very considerate treatment here, and it is gratifying to hear Capt. de Joannis' words in appreciation of the American spirit of sportsmanship.

No Quarrel at Manila.

Manuel L. Quezon, president of the Philippine senate, says in reply to a question that there is no quarrel between the senate and Governor General Wood. Certainly not. Why should there be one?

Gov. Wood knows the Filipinos, and they know him. He served successfully in the archipelago some years ago. Hence his choice for the principal executive office there at this time of unrest in that part of the world.

There is a movement in the islands, open and undisguised, for independence. Those directing it declare no hostility to the United States. On the contrary, they proclaim appreciation of what American control has done for the islands. Nevertheless, they want to establish a government of their own, and, of course, run it.

The idea is not popular in this country. Rather does the opinion prevail that the present is not an auspicious time for the setting up of a new government in the far east when the government now there is functioning well and to the advantage of all concerned.

Any new order of things in and for the Philippines would not, of course, be decreed by Gov. Wood, but by Congress, on the recommendation of the President, and then only after a full discussion of the situation on information gathered up to date.

Gov. Wood's duties are of an executive character, and there is every assurance that he will confine himself to them, and discharge them in a spirit of fairness and helpfulness toward all in interest. He has the President's confidence, and should have the support of all the people in the archipelago.

Vanishing "Agenda."

"Agenda" is not living up to the advance notices. For months before the conference on armament limitation met, agenda cut a wide swath in the newspapers and the publications that come after them, the magazines. Agenda promised to be a conspicuous, if not the most conspicuous, attendant upon the arms parley. No diplomat could speak of the coming conference, no near-diplomat could tell the world all that the conference would attempt and accomplish, no reporter could write a quarter column about the parley, and no special writer, commissioner or interpretative writer could rewrite the reporter's quarter column into two columns without introducing agenda. Some presented him as "The Agenda." He was to have a reserved seat at the conference. It seemed that he might be invited to a seat on the platform. But, the conference here, very little is heard or seen of agenda. The conferenece talks of "program," "proposals" and "bases of discussion," but seems to have very little use for agenda. There was something queer about that word from the beginning!

The Indians who visited this city have departed, in the hope, no doubt, that they will be invited to return and add a touch of picturesqueness by introducing the pipe-of-peace custom among nations.

It will hereafter be pretty generally understood through the world that in order to qualify as a diplomat a man must be a good traveler.

Great inventions are difficult to arrive at, but when they pertain to war making, getting rid of them is still harder.

SHOOTING STARS.

BY PHILANDER JOHNSON.

Safety First.

Though Impudence with Folly thrives,
And Greed all openly contrives,
Where is the man whom it would please
To quaff the cup of Socrates?

For life is sweet, though Truth is dear.
They who in comfort linger here
Must learn to smile and to endure
And be content to rest obscure.

Brief Disappointment.

"I understand some of your constituents disapproved of your latest speech."

"It's worse than that," rejoined Senator Sorghum, "a few disapproved, but the most of them didn't even pay enough attention to find fault."

Jud Tunkins says some men don't get very far in expressing ideas because they have devoted too much of their lives to learning long words.

Perfectly Plain.

Whatever be a nation's need
'Mid comment, gay or surly,
There is one fact the world must heed:
"We'd better all shop early!"

"Some men," said Uncle Eben, "is dat envious dey can't sympathize wif a sick man, because he has de privilege of staying in bed a lot of de time."

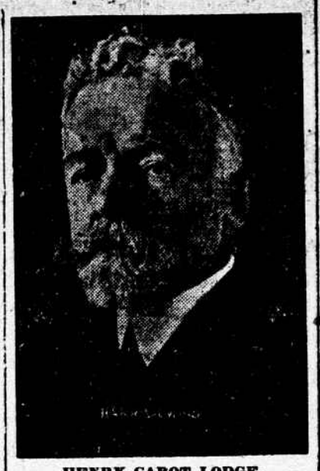
Household Gossip.

"Why did your cook leave?"

"She couldn't resist the temptation to eat the things my husband insisted on preparing in the chafing dish."

Who's Who At the Arms Conference

VII—Henry Cabot Lodge



HENRY CABOT LODGE.

LITERATURE and politics are strange mates. Yet Henry Cabot Lodge, senior senator from Massachusetts, leader of the republican majority in the upper house, who has become an institution in the republican party, and, indeed, in the government of the United States, gives as his profession "that of literature." And Mr. Lodge has made no mistake in so characterizing his profession.

Although his achievements as a politician and legislator have overshadowed his literary career, Mr. Lodge is a historian of note, of easy flowing style as well as of accuracy. His list of published works is a long one, covering many subjects of American history—for he has confined himself to the history of his own land in his writings. The first was published in 1877 and the last in 1917.

The writer recently asked Senator Lodge how he happened to "go in for politics." The veteran politician—he may with truth be called also a statesman—smiled one of his quizzical smiles. Searching back through his truly remarkable memory, he gave a brief description of his entrance into politics. He had early begun to take an interest in government. He was a republican in the early days of the party. He had attended several state and district conventions—in those days everything was done in conventions and "primaries" were unheard of. But it was in 1879 that he was more or less pitchforked into a political career. He was nominated to run for his district for the Massachusetts house of representatives. He was in New York at the time, and was notified by telegraph of his nomination. Much to the surprise of every one, he was elected, for it was a bad year for the republicans. That was his first office. It came unsolicited. But since that time, Mr. Lodge said, he has been an active candidate for office, and in the early years was sometimes defeated. He was elected in 1886 to the national House of Representatives, and twice thereafter. In 1893 he was elected to the Senate of the United States, and has been a membr of the Senate continuously since that date. In point of continuous service he ranks all the other senators today.

Senator Lodge is an exemplification of the type of cultured New Englander. This does not mean he has not tasted the joys of life and its sorrows, that he has not roughed it in the open, or that he is pedantic. He was born with a silver spoon in his mouth. He inherited wealth. He could have lived an idler all his life had he so chosen. But he did not. He worked hard at his literary work. He studied law for the training it gave and even went so far as to pass his bar examinations.

His early background in his Massachusetts home was most fortunate. He is a descendant of the Lodges and the Cabots, both families that made their marks in the Bay state. Solid business men and professional men were his ancestors—men of education and travel. As a boy he saw as intimates at his father's home in Boston or Nahant Charles Sumner, the great senator and abolitionist; Rufus Choate, the eminent lawyer; Motley, the historian; Agassiz, Longfellow, Dr. Henry Bigelow, the greatest surgeon of his time, and scores of other men of prominence.

Henry Cabot Lodge was a real boy. He lived by the sea and he loved it. When he was thirteen he owned his first sailboat, and sailed it. He swam and hunted and rode horseback and played all the games of boys of those days. This outdoor life probably is responsible for the fact that at the age of seventy-one he is an outstanding figure in America today, a recognized leader in his party and a member of the American delegation to the great conference on the limitation of armament.

Though older than Theodore Roosevelt, Mr. Lodge was a warm personal friend of the great President. Both were Harvard men, both were literary and both had similar ideas on many subjects.

When Mr. Lodge became chairman of the Senate committee on foreign relations it may be said that he had achieved a life's ambition. For he has always been intensely interested in international affairs and particularly the relations of America to the rest of the world. Before he entered Harvard, as a boy of sixteen, he spent a year in Europe with his family. And when he left Harvard he went back to Europe for the better part of another year. Incidentally, he took a wife with him on the second trip, for he was married the day after he graduated to Miss Anna Cabot Mills Davis, daughter of Rear Admiral Davis, U. S. N.

In the Senate during the last twenty-eight years, Mr. Lodge has been a power in debate and party council. When he speaks the Senate listens with attention. He is eloquent, clear and forceful. He speaks almost invariably without notes. The last few years when he has had to carry the burden of republican leadership in the Senate—a heavy burden particularly during the fight over the Versailles peace treaty and the league of nations covenant—Mr. Lodge has been at times sarcastic and irritable, easily aroused if crossed. But few men who have served in the Senate have been more highly regarded than the Massachusetts senator.

EDITORIAL DIGEST

The Status of Submarines.

Whether there shall be unlimited submarines, or no submarines at all, or submarines for defense only, is not, in the opinion of the Akron (Ohio) Beacon-Journal (republican), precisely a subject for discussion, for this paper regards our policy as having been defined when "during the war our State Department laid down the proposition * * * that the merchant ship shall have the right to carry arms for defensive purposes" and "that the submarine must, in regard to merchant ships, exercise the right of search as a precedent to seizure or destruction," which, the Baltimore News (independent) states, "a submarine could not observe," and that, therefore, "the fact of their use was a crime. We went to war partly to vindicate that belief. We won the war. We have not yet vindicated that belief. * * * To fail now to do our utmost to put an end to them would be a gross neglect of an imperative duty."

Mainly the discussion, unlike that quoted above, hinges upon Mr. Balfour's suggestion that submarines, if they must be retained in navies, be limited to coast defense. The New York Times (independent, democratic) thinks "no case can be made out for the use of the submarine against merchantmen," and the New York Herald (independent) finds the "only possible excuse" for using it at all is that "it costs less than honest ships." Even this doubtful advantage, however, would seem to be offset by the Louisville Courier-Journal (democratic), which points out that "many countries which cannot afford capital ships might well have large numbers of submarines," an idea further elaborated by the New York World's (democratic) observation that, although the five powers might adhere to an agreement not to build these boats, "that would not prevent some third-rate power from building submarines, and through them obtaining command of the sea." Although the Cincinnati Times-Star (republican) says that "self-interest has prompted Great Britain to ask the delimitation of submarine armament," the Ithaca Journal-News (independent) thinks the request "is not incompatible with the interests of this country and can readily be assented to." The Dayton News (democratic) states that the chief objection, "as reflected from statesmen and others in the United States, relates to the long coast lines" and the likelihood that "we shall be obliged to guard these coasts with submarines."

"The submarine is the acknowledged instrument of outlaw warfare, as are brass knuckles, knock-out drops and sawed-off shotguns of professional crooks," says the Pittsburgh Chronicle Telegraph (republican), but the Boston Transcript (independent republican) thinks it "has come to stay," and that for America "the submarine is an indispensable defensive weapon," while the Springfield (Mass.) Union (republican) cautions the "American public" to "give its full support to the Hughes' proposition."

The St. Louis Globe-Democrat (republican) concedes that "it may not be practicable now to abolish the submarine as a means of defense," but agrees with the Manchester Union (independent republican) on "barring the big fellows, the so-called fleet submarines, which could operate far from their bases and so take part in a naval war of offense." "The only excuse for the submarine is the torpedo," says the Buffalo News (republican), which thinks that to stop the manufacture of torpedoes "would have the effect of scrapping the submarine," and "every one of them in existance should be scrapped," in the opinion of the Knoxville Journal and Tribune (republican), since "the civilized people of the world do not want them as war machines," though the Mobile Register (democratic) thinks "there will be no objection to the maintenance of police and patrol forces sufficient to guard each nation's boundaries." The Columbus Dispatch (independent) thinks Mr. Balfour's suggestions look toward holding the submarine "rigidly to its only legitimate use" and that the "American delegation should think carefully before declining to agree to them," while the Providence Tribune (independent republican) thinks "it would seem as if England had by far the better part in the argument."

The Charleston (S. C.) News and Courier (democratic) believes "it should be possible to abolish submarines; and their abolition would do more to promote peace among the western powers than the abolition of capital ships. * * * Mr. Hughes' plan is mainly an economic measure and, important as the economic problem is, it is not as important as the peace problem," an observation which is seconded by the Pittsburg Dispatch (independent), which urges that "if we want peace let us go after it, instead of merely trying to modify war and the chances of it," and "outlaw the submarine, the bombing plane, poison gases and all the inventions of hell."

But What Is China?

The four principles written by Elihu Root and adopted by the Washington conference are the swift and ready recognition of the new Chinese declaration of independence, China is to have her chance. Her territory, her sovereignty and independence are guaranteed. Special privileges to no nation and equal rights for all have been decreed.

These four principles follow and interlock with the ten proposals of the Chinese. On broad and basic principles the conference has reached the heart of the far east problem, which is China. The principles are broad and basic; so broad, in fact, that they may mean everything or they may mean nothing. The time comes when details must be worked in; the sordid, painstaking, exasperating details. It is then that the trading, nibbling and sweating begin.

Territorial guarantees will serve as instance of what is coming. Chinese territory has been guaranteed. Very well, but just what is China?

Shall China be held to include Mongolia, Manchuria, Tibet and Chinese Turkestan, these "buffer states" of the old empire?

How far back shall we go, we white and brown looters, in restoring the loot we have looted? Now that we are "reforming," shall we give it all back or shall we plead that long ownership gives title and invoke the maxim that "possession is nine points in law"? In other words, how far back shall the statute of limitations run?

This territorial guarantee may be as harmless as warm milk or it may be as disturbing as dynamite or "self-determination." This limitation, delimitation and map-searching of the Chinese hinterlands is going to be interesting.—Philadelphia Public Ledger (independent).

Civil Power Paramount.

That is an interesting story coming from Washington to the effect that American naval experts are not to be permitted to determine or influence any of the policies involved in the armament conference. They are merely to ascertain and report upon facts when called upon. The American delegation, it is said, reserves to itself the privilege of shaping policies according to its own conception.

This attitude, we believe, is in full accord with public opinion. If the world never achieved reduction of armaments until the step was promoted by military experts, chances are that each nation would be armed to the limit when Gabriel should sound his trumpet. The military is educated in terms of force, thinks in terms of force and functions in the exercise of force. It is therefore lukewarm toward the limitation of its power.

Germany was organized on a military basis and dominated by the military spirit before plunging to her destruction. She resolutely refused even to consider projects of disarmament. Many persons declare that Japan's situation is very like that of pre-war Germany. She haggles over the Hughes proposals. America should avoid such a predicament at all hazards. Armies and navies should be servants, not governors of this country.—Chattanooga News (democratic).

Apparently Germany is to go to Stinnes as the all-highest bidder.—Baltimore Sun.